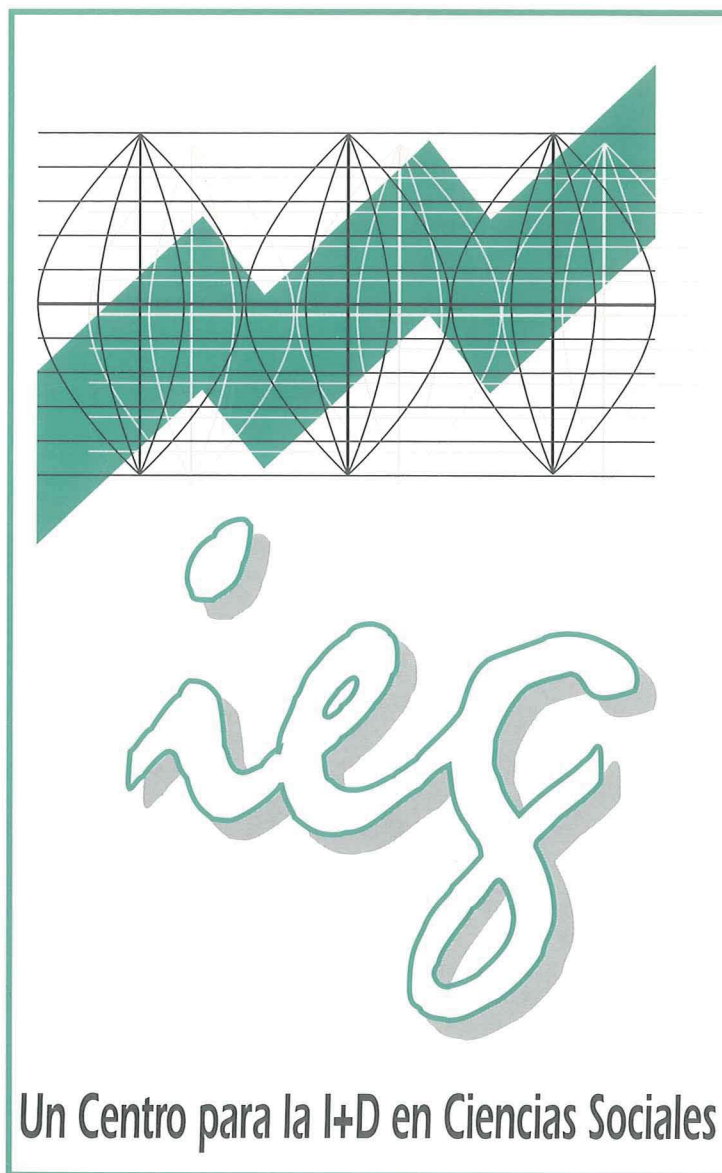


# INSTITUTO DE ECONOMÍA Y GEOGRAFÍA

## IEG



### **EUROPEAN RETIREMENT MIGRATION TO THE COSTA DEL SOL (SPAIN)**

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RESEARCH: European Retired Immigrants in Andalucía  
(CYCIT, SEC95-0120)



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The migration of retired people has gained a notable importance among the studies on the elderly, as ageing becomes more and more present in the modern world. The migration of retirees is not entirely a question of numbers (Longino, 1985), but figures are a very important aspect, in the same way as are the demographic and economic features of the migrants, their reasons for moving, and the consequences in the origin and destination areas. However, methodological questions and availability of data appear more discreetly in the literature.

Census data has traditionally been used as an essential source for studying the movement of the elderly population (Cribier, 1982; Warnes, 1983; Hugo, 1987; Rogers, 1989; Rogers, Watkins and Woodward, 1990). But ad hoc surveys have also been used, with two angles: researching people's desire to move before retirement, with the advantages involved in such an approach (Pampel et al., 1984), or situations where they are enjoying a second home after retirement (Sullivan, 1985). On the other hand, there does not appear to be any discussion of the suitability, advantages or problems of such surveys, with the exception of some questions arising concerning the under-representation of those respondents who tend to remain a short time at the destination (Krout, 1983; McHugh, 1990). Nor has any mention been made of aspects such as interpreting reality through desires expressed in a pre-retirement survey, or remembrance periods in surveys on retirees at their destination, or the types of floating migrants and their influence on the reference population, or the representativeness of information.

Analysis generally uses two-way contingency tables to detect relationships between variables, although multivariate analysis on the basis of survey data seems to be gradually taking over. It is

being used with a descriptive, rather than inferential, purpose, because of the lack of representativeness<sup>1</sup>.

An attempt has also been made to define the "retired migrant", to distinguish them from other groups of elderly mobile population, such as those detected by Hugo (1987), on the basis of the census data available in Australia, or those defined by Sullivan (1985), to distinguish migrants according to the length of their stay in the destination throughout the year, or types of people according to the year of arrival defined by Hazelrigg and Hardy (1995). These definitions are conditioned by socio-economic features and individual reasons for migrating. Wiseman and Roseman (1979) suggested geographical types of movement as a result of the decision to migrate<sup>2</sup>. Abellán (1993) considered this classification in the context of wide strategies of mobility among the elderly population and adapted to the case of Spain. Mayer and Speare (1985) developed a simplification, focused on individual characteristics, pointing out just a few<sup>3</sup>.

Scientific literature provides sufficient results in developed countries to be able to speak accurately of concepts such as seasonal migration (snowbirding), climatic amenity areas located in the south (sunbelts), and "ghettos" of elderly residents away from their place of origin (i.e. Sun City) (Rowles, 1986; Wiseman and Roseman, 1979; Golant, 1984; Rogers, Watkins and Woodward, 1990). Some general schemes have been outlined, such as Litwak and Longino's (1987), with three major flows, from the "snowbelt" to the "sunbelt" and from metropolitan areas to non-metropolitan areas, as movements to amenity areas, and movement among regions, in a search for individual attention; and also other aspects, such as the changes brought about in the areas of destination by retired migrants as a result of their dominant demographic and socio-economic features<sup>4</sup>.

There are various interpretative outlines of the demographic and socio-economic features that push the elderly population to move after retirement: immigrants in couples tend to move and remain in the place chosen for spending their retirement (Sullivan, 1985), particularly if they are very close couples (Law and Warnes, 1980); the most recent immigrants arrive at a younger

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<sup>1</sup> McHugh (1990) carried out a discriminant analysis to detect types of migrants (improbable, or probable), among people around retirement age. Mullins et al. (1989) also used it to examine loneliness among elderly Canadian residents in Florida, according to demographic, economic and social factors. Hazelrigg and Hardy (1995) used probit regression analysis to predict the features of immigrants who were newly-arrived or otherwise, according to the year of arrival at the destination. Mayer and Speare (1985) used a logistic regression analysis between socio-demographic factors (age, marital status, income, home ownership, previous mobility and health) and types of movement. Other methods insist more on qualitative aspects such as background or following a generation (Cribier and Kych, 1992).

<sup>2</sup> They included suburbanization, relocation within the urban areas, apartmentalization, communalization, homes of kin, institutionalization, movement to amenity, return migration and kinship migration.

<sup>3</sup> In particular, movement towards amenity zones, movement for attention to, and care of health problems, in preparation for old age, or general mobility.

<sup>4</sup> Hazelrigg and Hardy (1995) emphasize upon the fact that the host areas become rejuvenated and more wealthy, or the study of the growth components of the elderly population in destination areas, generally peripheral (Rowles, 1986), i.e.: in situ ageing and net migration of the elderly (Rogers, 1989, Rogers, Watkins and Woodward, 1990).

age than that of those who did it in previous periods (Hazelrigg and Hardy, 1995); migration tends to occur when the population reaches the age of 60 (slightly younger in women), in relation to the age of compulsory retirement (Law and Warnes, 1980; Warnes, 1983); the retired immigrant has a higher income level (Hazelrigg and Hardy); the presence of children restricts movement, as do strong and geographically close family ties (Law and Warnes, 1980); the emigration of retirees may be affected by the length and standard of education received, and by higher incomes (Law and Warnes, 1980); or there are differences in the migration of retirees when age and race are considered (Watkins, 1989).

Wiseman and Roseman (1979) established common features of older migrants, such as the frequency of past changes of residence, a low proportion of house-owners, a higher rate of unemployment, the predominance of single persons or with a higher standard of living, some of which may appear to contradict those pointed out by other authors. Warnes (1983) considers that these migrants form groups of medium and high income individuals, working in non-manual jobs, living in couples, with few or no children at home and with weak family ties in the place of origin.

Several authors point out various factors to explain reasons to migrate, depending on diverse circumstances, although there seems to be no sufficiently formalized theory on this.

An initial distinction should be made between "trigger mechanisms" and the factors that encourage or restrict migration. The former would be the events that "trigger" the decision, associated to essential facts in the life of the individual, such as the loss of independence, or compulsory retirement from a job (Wiseman and Roseman, 1979). The latter form series of circumstances, some to do with the individual or his or her family, others outside, among which are the absence of family ties, the physical ability to move, previous residential experience, particularly at a working age (Law and Warnes, 1980) or lack of satisfaction with the home (Law and Warnes, 1980) or with the neighbourhood, called residential stress by Burkhauser, Butrica and Wasylenko (1995).

Futhermore, Warnes (1983) added the frequency and distance of movements made during working life and the early age of retirement, and Cribier (1982) pointed out the rejection of life in a city flat, having nothing to do, or having health problems related to the urban climate. Krout (1983) and MCHugh (1990) examined the ties to the community in the place of origin as determining factors of the type of migration (seasonal when they are strong, permanent if they are weak). Other authors do not think this relationship to be proved (Sullivan and Steven, 1982). In other cases, mechanisms that inhibit migration are considered to be the existence of strong family ties and lower income levels among the young old, as occurs in Italy (Rogers, Watkins and Woodward, 1990).

Sullivan (1985) deems as favourable factors education, income, the absence of health restrictions and living as a couple, and as limiting factors the existence of ties with children or social cohesion in the area of origin. Fournier, Rasmussen and Serow (1988) confirm that the migration of retired persons is the response to the economic opportunity to find different income levels in the origin areas and destination.

Among the factors most commonly mentioned, the climate and environmental preferences are the most important. Pample et al. (1984), among various reasons detected, pointed out above all climate preferences, ties with other foreign communities and low density of population, whereas for Sullivan and Steven (1982) it is the climate and the desire to cure health problems. Svart (1976) took into consideration low population density, winter sunshine, warm and dry summers, infrequent but moderate precipitation, mountainous relief, coastal location, surface water and diverse vegetation to be the essential elements for environmental preferences. Other authors add the availability of leisure facilities which make the residential area more enjoyable (Rogers, Watkins and Woodward, 1990). Cuba and Longino (1991) include environmental reasons in the appeal felt by immigrants towards the areas of destination, along with the availability of leisure facilities, the proximity of the area of origin and the destination, or previous migratory experience.

To conclude, the study of the migration of retired people has a notable tradition in Anglo-Saxon countries, although no single type of movement or explanation can be found, as Wiseman and Roseman pointed out (1979). The need to unify concepts and analysis procedures and to organise fundamental lines of interpretation seems an unavoidable task at a time when this type of movement is generalised in the Western world.

The fundamental purpose of this paper is to present a descriptive analysis of the features of European retirees in the Costa del Sol, and the reasons they gave for moving to Spain after retirement, by means of the general results of the Survey on Retired European Immigrants. A more detailed study in the future will enable us to analyse it more thoroughly .

## 2. SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

The specific survey is an adequate tool to extract data about the features of retired migrants and their main reasons for moving to Spain. We encountered initial problems derived from a lack of knowledge on the initial size of the population to be surveyed on the Costa del Sol<sup>5</sup> and also on

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<sup>5</sup> There is no agreed figure, even, despite the various official and non-official sources. Some of them talk of around 75.000 retired northern Europeans in Spain (Wames, 1991), of whom most are British (Growing Old in Spain, 1993; Paniagua, 1991), and some other show possibly exaggerated figures (Mullan, 1992). There are also other nationals, such as Norwegians, in Alicante (Mykdebost, 1989). In all these cases, the figures are much higher than those actually taken by the census.

the structure by nationality, type of home, or town in which they reside<sup>6</sup>.

However, the figures from the 1991 Census enabled us initially to find population quotas to poll that were considered essential for carrying out the analysis of retired Europeans on the Costa del Sol. These quotas were later changed according to the progress of fieldwork, with blocks of flats being overvalued as compared to semidetached or detached houses, and non-British residents as opposed to British ones.

The final quotas were:

- By age and sex: male between 55 and 64 years old (18.3%) and 65 and over (32.3%) and female between 50 and 64 (24.3%) and 65 and over (25.1%).
- Type of home: blocks of flats or apartments (43.3%) and semidetached or detached houses (56.7%).
- Length of stay in Spain every year, making a distinction between under five months, indicating a temporary stay (29.7%), and over six months denoting stability (70.3%).
- The nationalities with the largest number of inhabitants to poll were British (63%), German (15%), Swedish (6.7%) and others (15.3%) such as Danish, Dutch, Belgian, Norwegian and Finnish.

The 300 surveys were unevenly distributed between the provinces of Málaga and Granada, due to the fact that retirees are unevenly located in the towns of both provinces (Table 1).

Table 1

Municipalities PROVINCE	PEOPLE INTERVIEWED	PER CENT
Mijas	64	21,3
Marbella	54	18,0
Benalmádena	31	10,3
Fuengirola	25	8,3
Torremolinos	20	6,7
Estepona	20	6,7
Torrox	20	6,7
Nerja	20	6,7
Manilva	15	5,0
Benahavis, Casares	10	3,3
MÁLAGA	279	93,0
Almuñécar	11	3,7
Salobreña	10	3,3
GRANADA	21	7,0

Fieldwork was carried out between 9th April and 18th May 1996. This was a fairly long period which was to become slightly inconvenient due to the difficulties found by the interviewers (some groups of nationals' refusal to answer, such as the Swedes; the absence of the temporary

<sup>6</sup> Similar indicators (place of origin, area of destination) were used by Law and Warnes (1980) to make the survey they carried out more representative.



population who had returned to their own countries; detached houses being located far apart from one another; or the difficulties involved in entering some residential estates).

The questionnaire was structured in various sections, depending on the object of the enquiry, such as the decision to come and live in Spain after retirement, the residential and housing background in Spain, the job situation before coming to Spain, the social relationships established, lifestyle and use of utilities in Spain, or respondents' opinion on various aspects of their life and integration. The questionnaire ended with a section on the personal features of the interviewees and their opinion on the official register of foreign residents in Spain. In total, 69 questions leading to 167 derived variables.

In general, the survey was clearly qualitative and descriptive in terms of the situation of retired Europeans, and therefore had no intention of making predictions, as it did not use the real resident population as a reference universe from which to accurately derive the sample. Age (under and over 65), nationality (British and non-British) and level of education (as far as secondary education and higher education) served to give the individual features of immigrants more meaning<sup>7</sup>. Some of the questions analysed had a multi-response structure, so, in those cases, percentages always exceeded 100 per cent.

### 3. SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Table 2 shows the general features of retired European immigrants on the Costa del Sol. They could be considered to be relatively young, as two thirds are under 69 years old. They are divided in half into men and women, as a result of the selected quotas, which is a different proportion to that observed among the native elder population of the Costa del Sol (45,8%, male; 54,2%, female). Seven in ten are married (widowed people come second), a similar proportion as that of those living with a partner. A quarter lives alone, in single-person homes. The educational level is between secondary and higher education (over 90%), with a noticeable correlation with jobs that require some sort of qualification, such as business, professionals and technicians, generally from companies in the public and financial services and commerce sectors. They are not particularly mobile once they arrive in Spain: three immigrants interviewed in four are still living in the same house they occupied when they first arrived, whereas only one in six moved once.

Almost two-thirds of the population are from the United Kingdom, with the Germans, Swedes and other nationals showing much lower percentages<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> The level of education could be one of the causes of the difference in personal income (Longino and Biggar, 1981).

<sup>8</sup> In other Spanish regions, such as the south-east coast (Ribera, 1992), Murcia (Serrano, 1991), Balearic or Canary Islands, this distribution is slightly altered.

Table 2

FEATURES OF EUROPEAN RETIRED ON THE COSTA DEL SOL (%)			
SEX		AGE	
Male	50,6	50-54 years old	4,3
Female	49,4	55-59	15,3
		60-64	23,0
		65-69	24,3
		70-74	16,0
		75 and over	17,0
MARITAL STATUS		INHABITANTS OF HOME	
Single	3,3	Living alone	25,2
Married or living with a partner	71,9	Living with a partner	69,1
Widow(er)	16,7	Living with other persons	5,7
Divorced or separated	8,0		
LEVEL OF EDUCATION		HOMES INHABITED IN SPAIN	
Primary	7,4	One	75,3
Secondary	51,0	Two	16,7
University or Higher	40,9	Three	5,7
Other	0,7	Four or more	2,3
NATIONALITY		PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS	
British	63,0	Bussinessman	23,7
German	15,0	Professional, Technician	34,8
Swedish	6,7	Manager	6,7
Belgian	5,0	Self-employed	18,4
Dutch	4,0	Employee	6,3
Danish	3,3	Manual worker	7,7
Finnish	1,7	Not applicable	2,3
Norwegian	1,0		
Other	0,3		
SECTOR OF ACTIVITY		AGE AT TIME OF ARRIVAL	
Agriculture	2,3	< 45 years old	4,7
Industry, Mining	19,4	46-50	8,0
Construction, Building	12,0	51-55	17,7
Commerce, Trade	20,8	56-60	24,0
Financial services	13,7	61-65	28,7
Public services	24,1	> 65 years old	17,0
Other	4,4		
Not applicable	3,3		

The mean age for moving to Spain after retirement is getting lower, so that those under 65 (average, 58 years old), came to Spain with 52, whereas the older inhabitants, averaging 71 years old, did so at around 60<sup>9</sup>. Therefore this proves one of the best known facts, i.e. the greater probability of younger retirees emigrating (Cribier, 1980; Burkhauser, Butrica, Wasylenko, 1995). Both ages of moving to Spain are fairly close to the age of retirement given by the interviewees (55 and 61, respectively), so it may be said that the "trigger mechanism" for

<sup>9</sup> Obviously, the women are younger due to their earlier retirement age than men or because they got married younger than their husbands.

European retirees coming to live in Spain is early retirement, which gives them plenty of time to enjoy the Costa del Sol.

The early 1980s saw the massive arrival of European immigrants. On average, the population polled refer to 1983 as the year of arrival at their first home on the Costa del Sol. The movement to their current home, in the case of those who moved house, is dated at 1986, so that an average of three years can be established for finding a definitive home among the more mobile members of the population.

Some of these features reveal certain differences when they are considered in relation to age, level of education and nationality (Table 3). Hence:

- Among the males, 65 year old and over predominate, as do individuals with higher education, with a slight predominance of men from the UK, as opposed to women.
- By marital status, the divorced and separated tend to be younger and with university degree. Those living with a partner are British, with secondary education and young old. It may also be said that among those who live alone, older people predominate, along with those with university education and those of non-British nationality. These three previous features can be also attributed to people considered as more mobile, i.e. having lived in more than two homes during the time they have been living in Spain.
- Among the over 65 year old, there is a slight predominance of immigrants who were businessmen or in management and who worked in industrial or commercial firms, whereas amongst the youngest, professionals, technicians and manual workers tend to predominate. The higher-level jobs are related to a higher level of education, although there is no clear pattern by nationality.

Table 3

	AGE		LEVEL OF EDUCATION		NATIONALITY	
	< 65	≥ 65	As far as Secondary	Higher or University	British	Non- British
SEX						
Male	43,6	56,4	43,9	61,0	54,0	45,0
Female	56,4	43,6	46,1	39,0	46,0	55,0
MARITAL STATUS						
Single	4,7	2,3	2,3	4,9	2,6	4,5
Married or living with a partner	72,4	71,5	71,7	72,3	75,7	65,5
Widow(er)	12,6	19,8	19,1	13,0	13,8	21,8
Divorced or separated	10,2	6,4	6,9	9,8	7,9	8,2
PREVIOUS OCCUPATIONS						
Bussinessman	21,2	25,6	24,3	22,9	27,1	18,0
Professional, Technician	35,4	33,2	27,7	45,1	31,4	40,6
Manager	15,7	20,3	17,3	20,5	18,6	18,0
Self-employed	7,1	6,4	7,5	4,9	8,0	4,5
Employee	7,8	5,3	9,3	7,5	5,3	8,1
Manual worker	11,8	4,7	11,6	1,6	6,9	9,0
Not applicable	0,8	3,5	2,3	2,5	2,7	1,8
SECTOR OF ACTIVITY						
Agriculture	2,3	2,3	2,9	1,6	2,6	1,8
Industry, Mining	16,4	21,6	18,6	20,3	15,9	25,5
Construction, Building	14,1	10,5	14,0	8,9	15,3	6,4
Commerce, Trade	18,0	22,8	26,7	11,4	24,4	14,6
Financial services	17,2	11,4	12,8	15,4	13,2	14,5
Public services	26,6	25,5	20,4	34,2	21,7	32,7
Other	2,3	2,9	1,7	4,1	3,2	1,8
Not applicable	3,1	3,5	2,9	4,1	3,7	2,7
INHABITANTS OF HOME						
Living alone	22,8	26,9	23,3	27,0	19,3	35,1
Living with a partner	70,9	67,8	73,2	64,0	73,7	61,3
Living with other persons	6,3	5,3	3,5	9,0	7,0	3,6
HOMES INHABITED IN SPAIN						
One	77,3	73,9	76,9	72,3	77,8	71,2
Two	15,6	17,4	13,3	22,0	15,3	18,9
Three	5,5	5,8	7,5	3,3	4,8	7,2
Four and more	1,6	2,9	2,3	2,4	2,1	2,7

#### 4. REASONS FOR MOVING TO SPAIN

One of the main purposes of this paper is to analyse reasons to move once the movement has effectively taken place, identifying the "trigger mechanisms" and considering the stimulating and

inhibiting factors. The decision to come to Spain by retired Europeans has been examined on the basis of the reasons provided<sup>10</sup>, the previous experience of residence in other countries, the wish for mobility in case of any alterations in their personal or family situation, and how settled their opinions are on their life in Spain.

The reasons can be organised into three groups. The first applies to the objective conditions that the Costa del Sol can offer to the European retired immigrant, such as the climate, the landscape, the lower cost of living, the communities of European residents already established in this area, or the availability of leisure facilities, in other words, the appeal of the destination. The second group is focused on the personal conditions of the immigrant, such as the wish to cure a health problem, the attraction of Latin culture or the Spanish way of life. The third may be associated with previous experience in Spain, or the image of Spain some immigrants may have acquired after having owned a house, or having enjoyed holidays or worked, having relatives or having received information about Spain.

An overview of these reasons (Table 4) helps to point out some significant features.

Table 4

	AGE		LEVEL OF EDUCATION		NATIONALITY	
	< 65	≥ 65	As far as secondary	Higher or University	British	Non- British
OBJECTIVE CONDITIONS						
Mediterranean climate	89,8	93,0	91,3	92,6	90,4	93,7
Spanish landscape	0,8	0,6	0,0	1,6	1,1	0,0
Lower cost of living	29,7	29,2	31,8	25,4	28,7	30,6
Foreigners communities	9,4	12,9	11,6	10,7	11,2	11,7
Leisure facilities	10,9	9,4	10,4	9,8	8,5	12,6
Geographical proximity	14,8	12,3	12,1	14,8	14,4	11,7
PERSONAL CONDITIONS						
Cure for health problems	20,3	22,8	24,3	18,0	17,0	29,7
Appeal of Latin culture	11,7	12,9	7,5	19,7	9,0	18,0
Spanish way of life	44,5	52,0	50,3	45,9	52,7	42,3
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IN SPAIN						
House	17,2	13,5	13,9	17,2	19,1	8,1
Holidays	30,5	25,1	28,9	25,4	29,8	23,4
Work	3,1	1,8	2,3	2,5	1,6	3,6
Information	6,3	8,2	9,8	4,1	8,5	5,4
Relatives	1,6	1,8	1,7	1,6	1,6	1,8
Other	3,9	3,5	1,2	7,4	3,7	3,6

<sup>10</sup> There are not reasons related to rejection of the family, social, or geographical environment in which they lived, as have been used by various authors (Cuba and Longino, 1991), but the reasons for feeling attracted to the Costa del Sol. The survey requested the first three reasons, in order of importance. Obviously, these reasons for the attraction may be related to others that are contradictory, which lead to their rejection of the place of origin.

#### 4.1. Objective conditions

More than 90% of those interviewed (Figure 1) put the climate in first, second, or third place as the main factor for moving to Spain. Seventy per cent gave it as first reason, in line with other studies on the sunny areas of the South of the large continental areas: the American "sunbelt" (Krout, 1983; Gober and Zonn, 1983; Cuba and Longino, 1991) or the Spanish coasts (Warnes, 1991; Myklebost, 1989). The climate is valued relatively more by those over 65, non-British and those with university degree. Added to the warm climate, there is a financial factor, the lower cost of living, which, at the time of their arrival, was propitious to the movement (Fournier, Rasmussen and Serow, 1988): almost 30% of the people interviewed mention this reason, but it was only given as the first reason by 5%. Those with secondary education consider this reason as relatively more important.

Far less importance is given to the existence of foreign communities (11%), which at the beginning help making social connections (Cuba and Longino, 1991), or the availability of leisure facilities such as golf courses or sailing clubs (10%), a way of life which is connected both to urban and rural environments.

Even geographical proximity between Northern European countries and the Costa del Sol does not play an important role in the decision to move to Spain (13%), and was given as the second or third reason. But the short distance is more significant among the British and those under 65, because of the frequency and cheaper flights between the United Kingdom and Mediterranean airports, compared with other European countries.

#### 4.2. Personal conditions

Among these reasons, the appeal of the Spanish way of life (however it is defined, it is well understood by European residents) carries plenty of weight, particularly as a second or third reason. This is a specific reason that is not given by other migratory waves of old people which, as they do not cross national frontiers, do not make a distinction between lifestyles (USA, Great Britain, France). More than half of the interviewed - British immigrants, those over 65 and those with secondary education - consider that the Spanish lifestyle is an outstanding reason, with a more "materialistic" view of migration. Something similar may be said of Latin culture (12%), with the non-British and those with higher education the most prominent.

Another reason for coming to live in Spain is to alleviate health problems, which are more frequent as the age increases (Myklebost, 1989). Almost 22% of those polled give this as a strong reason for making the decision to emigrate. This is the response to the contrast between the cold and damp areas of Northern Europe and the sunnier, drier areas in the South. Curing

health problems is a greater issue for those 65 and over, those with a higher level of education, and the non-British.

#### 4.3. Previous experience in Spain

The acquaintance of the destination area provides a great degree of familiarity (Cuba and Longino, 1991), which encourages moving. In the case of the Costa del Sol, more than 27% of those interviewed gave as their second and third reason to spend holidays in Spain or already having a house here as an element of that triggered their definitive movement (15%), mainly British and those under 65. Also, more of them say that they received information prior to their arrival in Spain from family or friends, however having received this information is held by a fewer percentage of the interviewees as a whole. There are no previous connections related to the individual's working life in Spain, nor relatives who attract the retirees to Spain, a circumstance which clashes with other studies in which the family plays a far more important role in the appeal, perhaps because they dealt with movements within the same country, where there are different relatives of varying degrees of blood relationship (Gober and Zonn, 1983).

A quarter of the retired immigrants on the Costa del Sol have had some experience of migration during their working lives. Among of these, just over a sixth have either lived in Spain before definitively settling on the Costa del Sol. From among the only 44 British who declared previous experience of mobility, almost 60% had resided in Anglo-Saxon oriented countries (Malta, Hong-Kong, India, the United States, Canada, South Africa). On the other hand, the non-British had tended to reside in European countries (such as France or Great Britain) or Africa and South America. In other words, the British had concentrated their experience in countries belonging to their own social and cultural environment, united by the same language, whereas the non-British tend to be more open, both linguistically and culturally, particularly regarding their attraction to Mediterranean or Latin culture. Still, the decision making process is almost always far more complex than it appears (Gober and Zonn, 1983).

#### 5. THE DESIRE FOR FUTURE MOBILITY

With old age, various individual, family and social problems arise that might make them change their mind about remaining in Spain over the next few years. The survey approached this issue as if it were going to happen in the future or, in the opposite case, as if it had already happened<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> The response to a situation which may not yet have occurred should not be considered a wholly reliable means of measuring a future modification of the desire to live in Spain.

The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Question	..I would continue living in my current home	..I would move to another home within Costa del Sol	..I would move to a home in my country of origin	..I would move to a residential/nursing home within Costa del Sol	..I would move to a residential/nursing home in my country of origin
If it was not able to do the daily shopping or to run the house...	41,2	21,9	30,0	4,7	2,1
If I had to stop driving a car...	53,4	25,6	17,4	1,8	1,8
If my health or that of my spouse or partner worsened...	31,4	7,9	41,8	7,1	3,8
If my spouse or partner should die...	55,1	10,8	31,9	1,1	1,1
If my income should fall considerably...	44,0	16,5	36,0	1,0	2,5
If my best friends here should move away....	89,0	3,1	6,7	0,9	0,3

The more unlikely the situation was suggested, the higher the rate of non-response, which shows how unthorough this question is for gauging how firm the respondent's decision to live in Spain is. Almost four, and more than three, of every ten interviewees did not reply to questions on the death of their spouse or a decrease in their income, respectively.

Between six and seven in ten retirees who replied, would in fact remain living on the Costa del Sol under circumstances that were not serious, but which might restrict their personal way of life and independence (inability to shop or to drive). Most would remain in the same house, which represents a notably stable behaviour. On the other hand, over 40% consider it possible they might return to a house in their own country if they lost their health or that of their partner. Thirty-six per cent would do the same if their domestic financial stability were affected by a loss of income. These are more serious circumstances. When the restriction affects only the social sphere (friends moving away), most of them would remain in the Costa del Sol. In all cases, the possibility of a definitive movement to a residential or nursing home, either in Spain or in their own country, was given scarce value; this is perhaps because moving into an institution involves a loss of personal, family, and social independence.



It is certainly curious to see that two thirds of those interviewed would stay in Spain even in the most negative case of the death of their spouse, a situation that leads to greater loneliness and isolation in the personal and even the social sphere.

In other words, there is a noticeable tendency for retired European immigrants to consider their stay in Spain as a permanent, in spite of what some restrictive situations would mean in terms of their everyday life. This behaviour is slightly greater among the British, those under 65, and those who have secondary education, and less so among the rest.

## 6. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF LIVING IN SPAIN

How much is left of the reasons the retirees gave for moving to Spain? In order to assess changes in motivation as both their time in Spain and their age advance, the European retirees were asked how firm their wish still was to continue living in Spain. Advantages and disadvantages surveyed are not parallel to the reasons for moving in all cases, but they do refer to similar ideas. Table 6 shows this information.

Table 6

	AGE		LEVEL OF EDUCATION		NATIONALITY	
	< 65	≥ 65	As far as Secondary	University or Higher	British	Non-British
<b>ADVANTAGES</b>						
Enjoyment of the landscape	40,6	43,6	41,6	43,9	30,2	63,1
The climate	87,5	87,2	86,7	87,8	86,8	88,3
Maintaining the standard of living	34,1	41,3	40,5	35,6	42,3	31,5
The relaxed and informal lifestyle of the Spaniards	64,1	57,0	59,0	61,8	65,6	50,5
Getting to know the Spanish way of life	32,0	23,8	27,2	28,5	25,9	29,7
Getting to know people from other countries	17,2	22,7	18,5	22,0	23,8	14,4
Other foreign resident communities	17,2	19,2	22,0	12,0	19,6	16,2
Others	3,1	1,8	1,2	3,3	2,6	1,8
<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>						
Cultural differences with the Spanish people	19,1	16,1	15,2	19,2	17,1	18,0
Language	72,7	69,8	77,5	61,5	75,9	61,8
Fewer services available	25,5	19,5	23,2	20,2	20,2	25,8
Climate too dry and hot	15,8	15,4	15,9	15,4	11,2	23,6
Environmental deterioration	34,5	24,2	28,5	26,0	27,6	30,3
Increase in the cost of living	38,2	37,6	37,1	40,4	42,4	29,2
Separation from the family	42,7	44,3	42,4	45,2	46,5	38,2
Ill-treatment of animals	1,8	1,3	1,3	1,9	0,6	3,4
Excessive noise	1,8	0,7	0,7	1,9	0,6	2,2
Bad service	1,8	2,7	2,0	2,9	1,8	3,4
Others	5,5	5,4	2,0	9,6	4,7	6,7

As was to be expected, the climate (Figure 2) is still the greatest advantage for almost nine out of ten of those interviewed alongside enjoyment of the Mediterranean landscape (40%). Both are valued relatively more by those with university education and those non-British. Neither the

disadvantages of the over-dry and hot climate, nor of environmental deterioration are important enough to counter European retirees' good opinion of the environmental standard of the Costa del Sol. This is undoubtedly the greatest asset for attracting and maintaining a population that wishes to spend its post-working life with the environmental standards they did not fully enjoy in their country of origin.

The Spaniards' lifestyle, more relaxed and informal, is also seen positively by interviewees (60%), particularly by the British and by the younger of them, who see in Spain the chance to take advantage of the standard of living reached after retirement. However, an important percentage of retirees (almost 40%), believe that there has been an increase in the cost of living, which is causing significant problems for many retirees, particularly the British. More than one fifth believe that Spain does not have as many services as in their own country, at an age at which, along with material needs, other needs supplied by community services start to be felt<sup>12</sup>.

Only 27% of those interviewed think that getting to know the Spaniards and their way of life is an advantage of living on the Costa del Sol. This percentage becomes smaller when it refers to people from other European countries or from their own. So it would not appear that belonging to a social circle that includes other foreigners is a particular advantage for staying in Spain. Whereas under 65 year-old newcomers still have a notable interest in Spanish life, particularly when they are not British, and when their level or education is higher; the elder Britons tend to give greater value to relationships with their compatriots and other Europeans, in a clear wish to form groups separated from Spanish life.

Evidence is most clear that the language is the main disadvantage of living in Spain (Figure 2), and it is also a barrier for integration (Growing Old in Spain, 1993): seventy-one per cent think so, particularly when they are younger and have just arrived, their educational level is lower, and they are British. Perhaps the feeling of isolation due to separation from the family contributes to this, as was stated by over 43% of those interviewed, particularly the more elderly and the British, who are more closely tied to material living conditions.

Finally, and in spite of their minor quantitative significance, some of the disadvantages declared involving environmental standards ("ill-treatment of animals", "too much noise", "insecurity"... ) are the expression of a growing concern about environmental deterioration and demographic massification, particularly when those interviewed were non-British, had a higher education and were, in general, over 65 years old.

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<sup>12</sup> It is well-known that the provision of services in Spain, in spite of the increase over the last few years, is not on a par with the European average. Mullan (1992) points out various services for the elderly in Spain that are scarce and unevenly distributed as a major problem for European retirees. The concern of the British for material aspects of their living in Spain is also recognized by other qualitative researches (Mullan, 1992; Harbert, 1994; Growing Old in Spain, 1993).

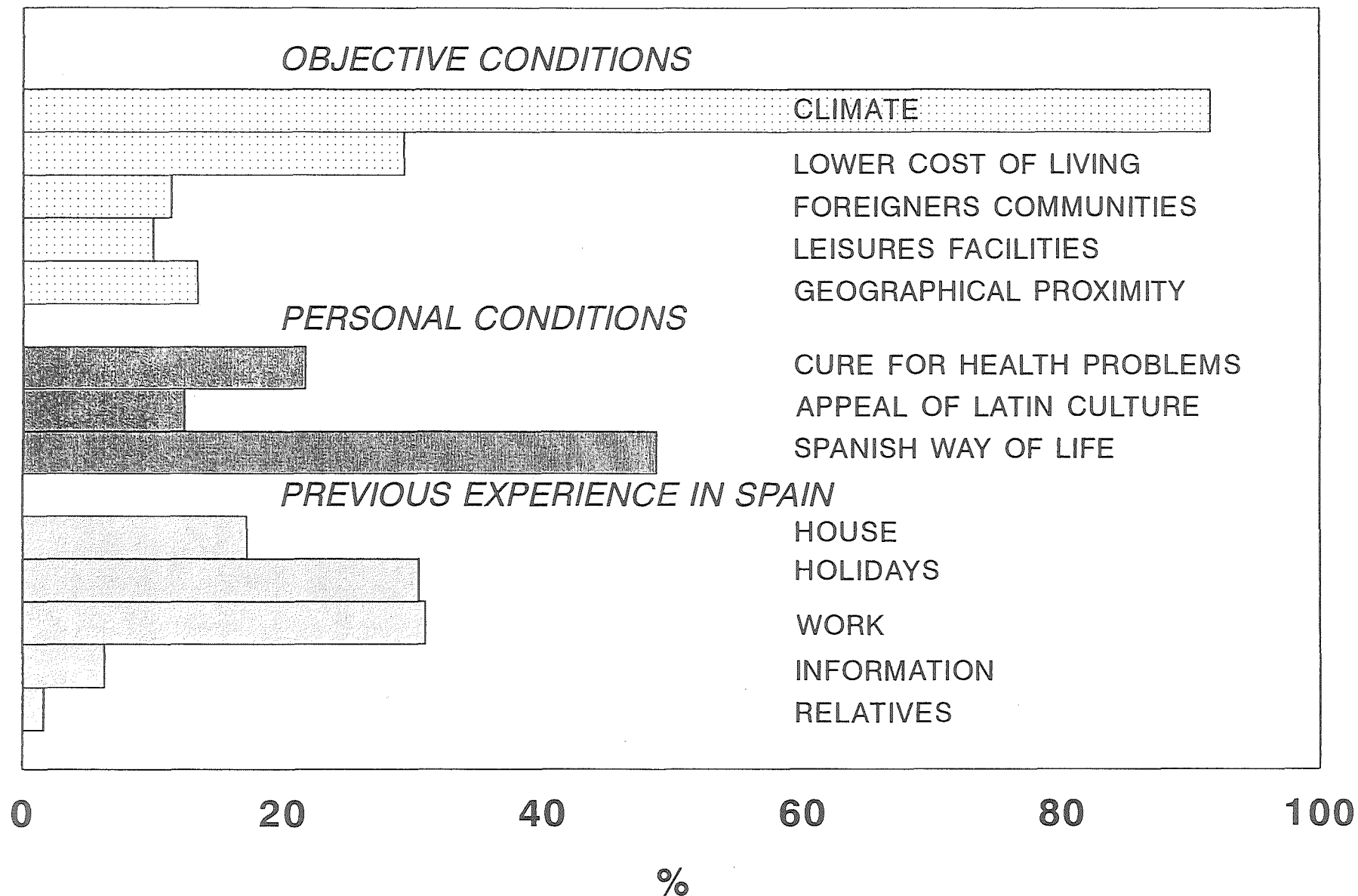
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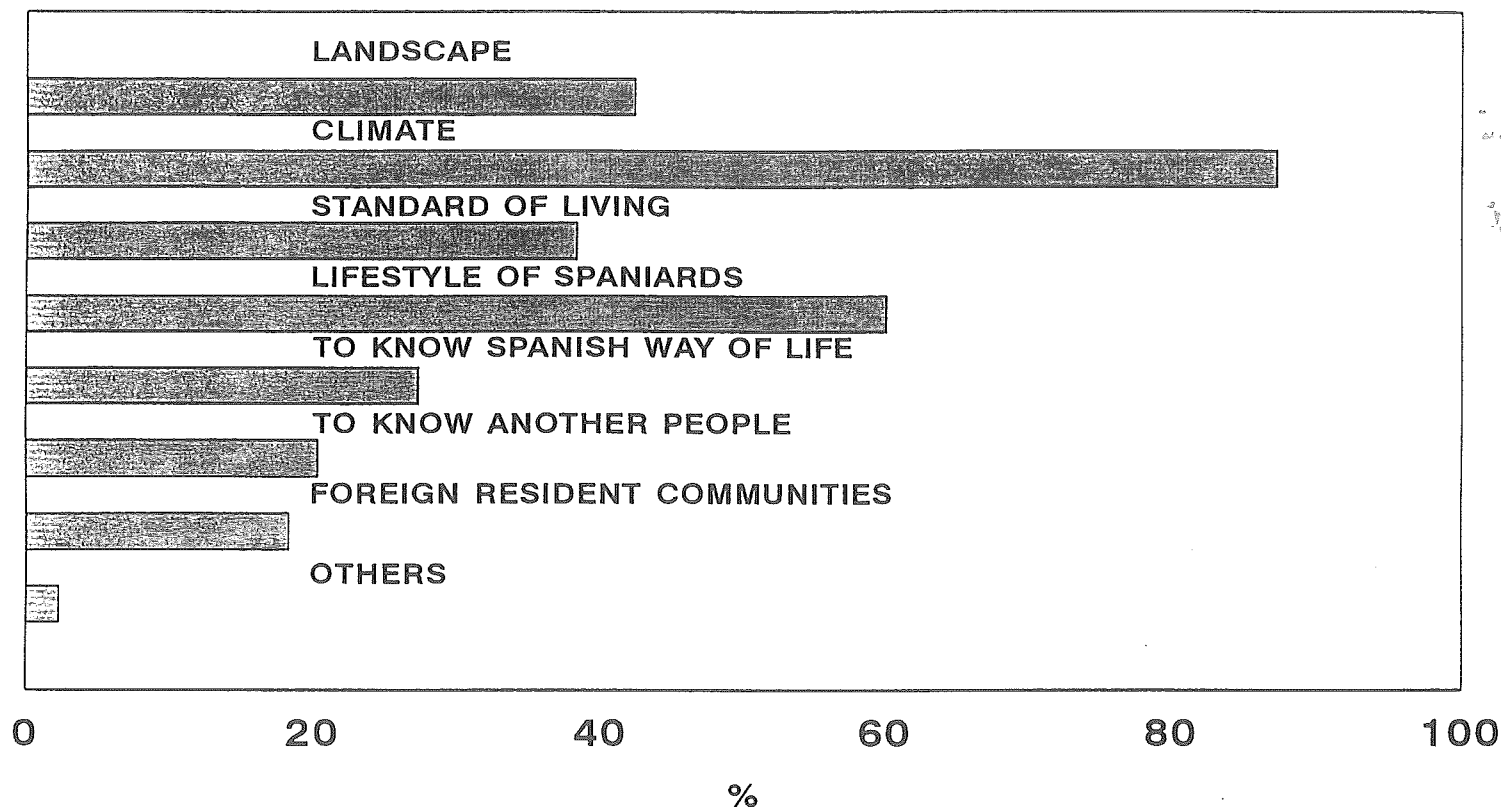
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# FIG 1. REASONS FOR MOVING TO SPAIN



# FIG 2. LIVING IN SPAIN

## ADVANTAGES



## DISADVANTAGES

